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Video seems to show killing of 2nd journalist

ISIS claims to have beheaded American Steven Sotloff PAGE 7

Study links polar vortex to melting sea ice

As the world gets warmer, expect more cold air PAGE 9

DARK MATTER

'DOOM SOUL' PURVEYOR COLD SPECKS RETURNS WITH A NEW ALBUM OF MOOD MUSIC PAGE 15

A screen grab of an elevator surveillance video that allegedly shows Centerplate CEO and president Desmond Hague kicking a dog. COURTESY GLOBAL NEWS

CEO out after dog-kicking video footage

Resignation. Move comes after catering company said it would be censuring and placing Desmond Hague on 'indefinite probation'

The CEO of the sports catering giant that provides food at BC Place stadium has resigned following an incident in which he was caught on camera allegedly kicking a dog in a downtown Vancouver elevator.

Centerplate's board of directors announced Tuesday that Desmond Hague had resigned from the company and is being replaced by Chris Verros, who previously held the position of chief operating officer.

"We want to reiterate that we do not condone nor would we ever overlook the abuse of animals," said Joe O'Donnell, chairman of Centerplate's board of directors. "Following an extended review of the incident involving Mr. Hague, I'd like to apologize for the distress that this situation has caused to so many, but also thank our employees, clients and guests who expressed their feelings about this incident. Their voices helped us to frame our deliberations during this very unusual and unfortunate set of circumstances."

The company said Hague would donate $100,000 to establish the Sade Foundation, in honour of the dog in the video, to support the protection and safety of animals in Vancouver, and that he would also serve 1,000 community service hours with an organization that serves to protect the welfare and safety of animals.

Hague has publicly apologized for the incident. He has also promised to take anger-management counselling.

Crown counsel is reviewing the case. THANDI FLETCHER/METRO

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NEWS 1

FIVE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW TODAY

1
STREET ART DOC
Checked out the massive OSGEMEOS mural on Granville Island yet? Tonight, the Vancouver Biennale presents Grey City, a documentary on the Brazilian graffiti artist twins.

2
FRINGE TURNS 30!
The annual Vancouver International Fringe Festival celebrates its 30th birthday bash tonight with a fundraising event at Performance Works on Granville Island.

3
2000 AND LATE
Don't look now, but your smartphone is obsolete. Samsung's Galaxy Note 4 debuts today, with unveilings in New York, Berlin and Beijing. iPhone 6 comes next week.

4
GLOBAL FAILURE
Doctors Without Borders has chastised the world's response to the Ebola outbreak, saying treatment centres have been "reduced to places where people go to die alone."

5
CHUCKY 2.0
For those young (and scary) at heart, Mezco Toyz will soon market a version of Annabelle, the terrifying doll in the 2013 horror movie The Conjuring and set to return in a sequel.

Private school enrollment up in face of BCTF strike

Independent schools. Initial reports show 4.5% increase in registration

EMILY JACKSON
emily.jackson@metronews.ca

More B.C. parents decided to send their children to private school this fall amid simmering labour turmoil between teachers and the province over the summer, according to preliminary enrollment numbers from the Federation of Independent School Associations B.C.

Initial reports indicate private school enrollment increased 4.5 per cent from last year, compared to an average annual growth rate between 1 and 2 per cent over the past decade, FISA B.C. executive director Peter Froese said Tuesday.

The influx is based on preliminary data from 22 per cent of the 300 independent schools across the province, Froese said. It's tracking higher than the elevated enrollment increase (4.1 per cent) seen in 2013 after a "difficult" 2012 in public education, he added.

But Froese said parents' primary reasons for choosing independent schools were educational programming and alignment with personal values, not unrest in the public system.

"It's certainly a factor, but it's not the only factor," he said. "The fact that there is a strike that's taking place, that's certainly not a situation where we would want to harvest students from the public sector."

Private schools have bucked the trend of declining enrollment in the public system over the past decade, Froese said.

They don't see the strike as an opportunity to get more students as they already have limited capacity and waiting lists, especially in Metro Vancouver, he added.

"Our wish is that this can be resolved quickly," he said. "We don't think this is productive for students in B.C. We have one of the best education systems across the globe, and we want that education available to all students in B.C."

Emma Jackson, 14, entering Grade 10 at Windermere Secondary School, holds a sign with purposely misspelled words during a rally by students opposed to the teachers' strike in Vancouver on Tuesday. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Students eager to get back to school

'We feel neglected.'
Teachers' strike delays start of the school year

Queena Zeng anticipated her final year of high school would be fairly stressful, packed with cram sessions and the nerve-racking wait for university acceptance letters.

Instead, Zeng, 17, is afraid crucial learning time is being wasted for her and half-million other British Columbia public school students who won't be starting their school year on time.

While the rest of the country's children went back to class on Tuesday, the province's fall term began under the cloud of a teachers' strike that started 14 weeks ago and has no apparent end in sight.

"Personally, my friends, we feel neglected. We're just here on the sidewalks waiting for something to happen," said Zeng, who should be attending Grade 12 at Steveston-London Secondary School in Richmond.

The province's more than 40,000 teachers have been without a contract since June 2013. The union mounted escalating stages of labour action starting last April in an attempt to get movement from the employer at the bargaining table. After three weeks of rotating strikes, teachers launched a full-scale walkout about two weeks before the end of the last school year.

Both parties accuse each other of refusing to budge on contract demands, with the government suggesting the gulf is $300 million while the union says it has already chopped $100 million from its proposal. No new meetings have been scheduled.

Union president Jim Iker said the teachers' No. 1 priority is getting guaranteed funding to improve class size and class composition and to increase the number of specialist teachers.

"We don't want to be out on the line. We would rather be in our schools today," Iker told reporters on Tuesday as teachers picketed outside Vancouver's Britannia Secondary. "(But) for us to relieve all pressure on government, that's not going to get us a deal."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"Nobody knows the answer and it's tough. People do want to go back to school."

Queena Zeng, a Grade 12 student, on the teachers' strike

Surrey

Man charged with sex assault and kidnapping of girl

Mounties have arrested and charged a man who allegedly lured a nine-year-old girl out of her bedroom window and sexually assaulted her in a nearby Surrey park last week.

Surrey resident Donovan Adams, 23, was arrested in Surrey City Centre on Thursday evening, Surrey RCMP announced Tuesday.

After an extensive investigation over the weekend, Adams has been charged with kidnapping, sexual assault, sexual interference, committing an indecent act and break and enter.

Home security videos from neighbours in the 9900 block of 128 Street helped police lay the charges, according to a statement from Surrey RCMP Supt. Trent Rolfe.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

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PNE Playland to open Fridays during strike

Three weekdays in September. PNE was inundated with calls, says spokesperson

Students can look forward to Fridays full of rides, games and fair food instead of recess, lessons and lunch boxes, if the teachers' strike lasts throughout September.

The PNE's Playland will open for the first three Fridays this month in response to a "dramatic" number of calls from parents looking for places for young people to go, PNE spokeswoman Laura Ballance said Tuesday.

The PNE was inundated with hundreds of calls from parents over the past couple days, especially on Tuesday morning when children were supposed to be hitting the books, Ballance said.

"We've really been quite overwhelmed by the response," she said.

It's the first time Playland will open on Fridays in September, Ballance said, although it was already scheduled to operate the first three weekends.

The move comes after a successful year for the fair; attendance jumped to 769,242 guests from 712,049 in 2013, which marked the lowest attendance levels in a decade.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Hole-y!

2 million

Number of doughnuts sold at Those Little Donuts stand at the PNE this year

Children ride a roller-coaster at the PNE. JEFF HODSON/METRO FILE

Cody Legebokoff. Lawyer asks for second-degree murder conviction

The lawyer for a B.C. man accused of killing three women and a 15-year-old girl has asked the jury to convict his client of second-degree murder, not first-degree murder as charged.

James Heller said Tuesday that his client, 24-year-old Cody Legebokoff, admitted in B.C. Supreme Court last week that he was present when the women died but that he didn't murder them and that the girl killed herself.

Legebokoff testified that the women were killed by a drug dealer and two associates and handed them the murder weapons. But he refused to name his alleged accomplices, saying he didn't want to go to prison being labelled a "rat."

Legebokoff is charged with four counts of first-degree murder in the deaths of Jill Stuchenko and Cynthia Maas, both 35, Natasha Montgomery, 23, and 15-year-old Loren Leslie.

Heller told the jury there is reasonable doubt that the murders were planned and deliberate.

The lawyer said he didn't expect jurors to believe every word of Legebokoff's testimony but he hoped they would consider the plausibility of some of his statements.

Heller went through evidence indicating the women were drug users and that Stuchenko and Montgomery had drug debts.

One witness testified he paid off a $500 debt for Stuchenko and another said Montgomery's head was shaved because she owed money. Whether Maas was in debt was more questionable according to the evidence Heller reviewed.

Legebokoff told police that Loren Leslie, a partially blind 15-year-old girl, went crazy and began hitting herself with a pipe wrench and then appeared to have stabbed herself with a knife before she was found on the night of Nov. 27, 2010, near a gravel pit north of Vanderhoof, B.C.

He said that in a fit of panic he hit Leslie on the head before dragging her body into the bush and then fled the scene.

Heller noted that Leslie had been released from 18 days in psychiatric care less than a week before her death and an RCMP officer found evidence that she had been overdosing on medication prescribed to her on the day of her release.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Budzilla

Police bust another marijuana shop

Vancouver police executed a search warrant at a marijuana store Tuesday, the third search in just over three months of dispensaries typically ignored by authorities.

Several complaints sparked a preliminary investigation into Budzilla at 2267 Kingsway before officers executed the warrant, according to a police news release.

Budzilla was selling THC-infused candies and cookies in packaging that could appeal to children at its store along with several others, according to police.

Officers also allege the store sold drugs to "virtually anyone that walked in the door," even if they didn't have a Health Canada licence to possess marijuana.

The VPD says its top priority is violent drug traffickers and people who prey on youth or marginalized people, but police will continue to respond to complaints about marijuana shops to see if further action is required.

EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Fashion-forward, peanut butter-loving dog duo are Internet's new superstars

'The Pointer Brothers.' Travis and Gus famous after owner opens Instagram account to document their lives

THANDI FLETCHER
thandi.fletcher@metronews.ca

Look out, Grumpy Cat.

Two dashing dogs from Vancouver are barking up a storm on social media with their shared love of peanut butter and fierce fashion choices.

With more than 100,000 loyal Instagram followers, German shorthaired pointer dogs Travis, 11, and Gus, 4 — known as "The Pointer Brothers" — are fast becoming Internet superstars after owner Stephanie McCombie created a social media account for her furry friends four years ago.

"I started it because I felt like I was probably driving my friends crazy on my personal Instagram account because all I was posting was the dogs," McCombie said with a laugh. "And it just went crazy."

McCombie adopted Gus from a Utah animal shelter four years ago, a day before the puppy was scheduled to be euthanized, while Travis was adopted last year from Squamish, B.C., after the dog was injured in a bear attack.

It wasn't until she captured on camera the "super funny" sight of her dogs licking their peanut butter-coated lips, however, that McCombie came up with the concept for the canine Instagram page.

Since then, McCombie said the page has evolved into her dressing the dogs in various fashion-forward outfits, from bow ties to scarves, glasses and American Apparel hoodies.

Considering the dogs' willingness to dress up and pose for pictures, it's hard to believe the animals were once camera shy.

"When we first got Travis, he was really afraid of the camera," said McCombie. "He would hide his face or lie down."

Since giving him with treats in exchange for photos, however, McCombie said Travis now starts posing for the camera as soon as he spots the lens.

A lifelong dog lover and social media enthusiast, McCombie said the Instagram account's success is a dream come true.

The dogs have become so popular that McCombie runs the Instagram account full-time. She said she hopes to one day turn the photos into a book.

"I've always wanted to work with dogs," she said. "And now I get to stay home with them and take lots of photos and do what I love."

To see the dogs' Instagram account, visit instagram.com/ifitwags.

A fashion-forward dog duo from Vancouver is barking up a storm on social media. COURTESY STEPHANIE MCCOMBIE

Rescued false killer whale adjusts to life in larger pool

Chester, the false killer whale calf found stranded six weeks ago on a Tofino beach, is adjusting to a larger pool after it was moved Aug. 28 at the Vancouver Aquarium's Marine Mammal Rescue Centre. COURTESY VANCOUVER AQUARIUM

It was a laborious long weekend for Chester, the young false killer whale found stranded six weeks ago, as the growing calf adjusted to life in a larger pool at the Vancouver Aquarium's Marine Mammal Rescue Centre.

"It was really just a matter of getting acclimated to a new situation," Dr. Martin Haulena, the aquarium's head veterinarian, told Metro. "For a couple of days, he was just a little bit slower, a little bit more cautious about exploring the new pool."

The young male calf, found stranded on a Tofino beach July 10, was moved to the larger pool Thursday to facilitate its ability to swim faster and dive deeper, important activities for its muscle development.

The move proved to be an adjustment for Chester but by Tuesday, Haulena said the cetacean was back to its normal routine of swimming on its own, enjoying hourly feeds and chasing aquarium staff in its pool.

"He's super-playful," he said with a laugh. "He's a very funny little guy."

Moving Chester, named after Tofino's North Chesterman Beach where it was found, is a significant milestone for the marine mammal as it continues to make strides each day, said Haulena.

"I'm very happy with his progress," he said. "Certainly, having him here this long is amazing and it went against all odds by getting this far."

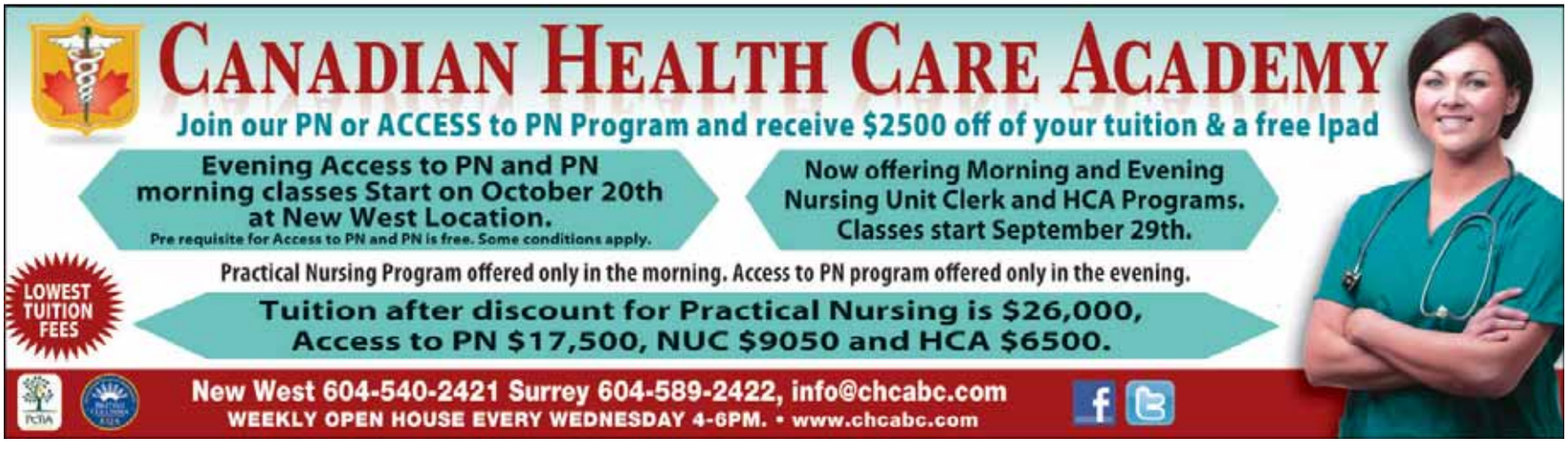
However, Haulena said he is still worried about Chester's respiratory tract.

Recent blood work revealed the whale might be fighting off an infection, which Haulena said could be a sign of pneumonia.

A team of researchers is monitoring Chester's respiratory function to study the calf's lung function and pulmonary system, an area of the body that tends to be vulnerable to disease in cetaceans, he said.

Having Chester at the rescue centre is a rare opportunity for scientists to study marine mammals in a non-invasive way, said Haulena. That knowledge can benefit cetaceans in the wild, he said.

The next step for Chester's recovery will be introducing solid fish to its diet, said Haulena. THANDI FLETCHER/METRO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Bieber's lawyer points finger at paparazzi

Pop star arrested Friday near Stratford. Artist charged with dangerous driving and assault after a collision

This Jan. 23, 2014, file photo made available by the Miami Beach Police Dept., shows Justin Bieber at the police station in Miami Beach, Fla. MIAMI BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Justin Bieber's camp is pointing a finger of blame at the paparazzi for the Canadian pop star's latest run-in with the law in Canada.

Ontario Provincial Police said Bieber, 20, was arrested Friday and charged with dangerous driving and assault following a collision between a minivan and an ATV in a rural area northeast of Bieber's hometown of Stratford.

The driver of the ATV and an occupant of the minivan "engaged in a physical altercation," according to police.

Const. Kees Wijnands would not say whether Bieber was driving the ATV, but pictures posted online show the star and on-and-off girlfriend Selena Gomez riding on an ATV on Friday.

Wijnands said there were no injuries as a result of the collision, but couldn't say whether there were any injuries from the altercation.

"He attended our office and he was arrested," Wijnands said. Bieber was then released on a promise to appear in court Sept. 29.

In a statement emailed to The Canadian Press, Bieber's lawyer in Toronto indicated the paparazzi were involved but provided no details.

"Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez's peaceful retreat in Stratford this weekend was unfortunately disrupted by the unwelcome presence of the paparazzi," said Brian Greenspan.

Quoted

"Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez's peaceful retreat in Stratford this weekend was unfortunately disrupted by the unwelcome presence of the paparazzi."

Brian Greenspan, Bieber's lawyer in Toronto

"This has regrettably resulted in charges of dangerous driving and assault. Mr. Bieber and Ms. Gomez have fully co-operated in the police investigation. We are hopeful that this matter will be quickly resolved."

Just a few days before the incident, Bieber's car was hit from behind by a vehicle driven by a photographer in Hollywood and the Grammy Award-nominated singer tweeted: "There should be laws against what I just experienced. We should have learned from the death of Princess Diana ..."

He then tweeted: "... I don't have a problem with Paparazzi but when they act recklessly they put us all in danger."

This is Bieber's second brush with the law in Canada.

Early this year Toronto police charged him with assault, alleging he hit a driver several times in the back of the head after he and five others were picked up by a limousine in the early hours of Dec. 30.

There is a court hearing in that case scheduled for Sept. 8, but Greenspan said Bieber won't attend.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dethroned beauty queen wants apology, holds crown ransom

A dethroned 16-year-old beauty queen from Myanmar said Tuesday she won't return her bejeweled $100,000 crown until pageant organizers apologize for calling her a liar and a thief.

May Myat Noe — the country's first winner of an international beauty contest — lashed back at her accusers at a tightly packed news conference.

She said representatives of the Miss Asia Pacific World pageant lied about her age — saying she was 18 instead of 16 — and tried to pressure her into getting plastic surgery "from head to toe."

Noe denied having breast implants as claimed by David Kim, director of media for the South Korean-based pageant. He said the surgery was provided free of charge, part of efforts to boost the teen into super-stardom.

Kim said Noe was stripped of her title last week because she was dishonest and unappreciative and that she ran off with her tiara after learning of the decision.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

May Myat Noe, Myanmar's first international beauty queen, winner of the 2014 Miss Asia Pacific World. GEMUNU AMARASINGHE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

American journalist Steven Sotloff, who was kidnapped in August 2013 near Aleppo, Syria, talks to Libyan rebels near Misrata, Libya, in June 2011. An Internet video has been released that purports to show the beheading of Sotloff by the ISIS terrorist group. ETIENNE DE MALGLAIVE/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Video appears to show second U.S. journalist beheaded by ISIS

'A Second Message to America.' Terrorist group says murder of Steven Sotloff is retribution for continued U.S. airstrikes

Extremists from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group released a video Tuesday purportedly showing the beheading of a second American journalist, Steven Sotloff, and warning U.S. President Barack Obama that as long as American airstrikes against the militants continue, "our knife will continue to strike the necks of your people."

The footage — depicting what the U.S. called a sickening act of brutality — was posted two weeks after the release of a video showing the killing of James Foley and just days after Sotloff's mother pleaded for his life. Barak Barfi, a spokesman for the family, said that the Sotloffs had seen the video but that authorities have not established its authenticity.

Sotloff vanished in Syria in August 2013 and was not seen until he appeared in a video released last month that showed Foley's beheading. Dressed in an orange jumpsuit, Sotloff was threatened in that video with death unless the United States stopped airstrikes on ISIS.

In the video distributed Tuesday titled A Second Message to America, Sotloff appears in a similar jumpsuit before he is apparently beheaded by a fighter with ISIS, the extremist group that has conquered wide swaths of territory across Syria and Iraq and declared itself a caliphate.

The fighter who apparently beheads Sotloff in the video calls it retribution for Obama's continued attacks.

"I'm back, Obama, and I'm back because of your arrogant foreign policy toward the Islamic State … despite our serious warnings," the fighter says. "So just as your missiles continue to strike our people, our knife will continue to strike the necks of your people."

In the video, the organization threatens to kill another hostage, this one identified as British citizen David Cawthorne Haines. It was not immediately clear who Haines was.

Britain and France called the killing "barbaric." In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said U.S. intelligence analysts will work as quickly as possible to determine if the video is authentic. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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32 teens escape from Nashville detention centre

Breakout via crawling under a fence. 23 youths caught, nine still on the run Tuesday

Thirty-two teens escaped from Woodland Hills Youth Development Center, a youth detention centre in Nashville, by crawling under a weak spot in a fence late Monday night, and nine were still on the run Tuesday, a spokesman said.

The teens — ages 14 to 19 — left their rooms at about 11 p.m. Monday and "overwhelmed" the staff in a common area, Tennessee Department of Children's Services spokesman Rob Johnson said.

The group then kicked out a metal panel under a window to get into a yard, and ran for a chain-link fence.

The fence is buried 20 centimetres into the ground, but the teens managed to pull up a weak portion and slip out underneath it. Staff alerted police once they saw them escaping, he said.

Two were captured immediately and others were found overnight. Some were found by authorities, others turned themselves in and still others were turned in by their families, he said. Police were still searching for nine of the teens on Tuesday, while the other 23 were taken to juvenile court and could face escape charges, officials said.

Most of the 78 detainees had committed at least three felonies, Johnson said, but the facility is more like a high school with security than an adult prison. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Police work in front of the Woodland Hills Youth Development Center Tuesday in Nashville, Tenn. MARK HUMPHREY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Mississippi

Woman convicted of murder after illicit butt injections

A Mississippi woman convicted of killing a Georgia woman through illicit silicone buttocks injections has been sentenced to life in prison.

Tracey Lynn Garner, of Mississippi, was sentenced Tuesday. Garner was convicted of depraved heart murder and conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Garner was charged in the death of Karima Gordon who, prosecutors say, was lured by Garner to perform the injections. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fatal shooting by Uzi

Girl said gun was too much for her: Police report

A nine-year-old girl who accidentally killed an instructor with an Uzi at a shooting range said after the shooting that she felt the gun was too much for her and had hurt her shoulder, according to police reports released Tuesday.

Her family members were focused on the girl because they thought she was injured and didn't realize instructor Charles Vacca had been shot until one of his colleagues ran to him.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Casino shuts down its doors

Casino workers and customers walk out of the Revel Hotel Casino together early Tuesday morning in Atlantic City, N.J. The casino section of the Revel closed at 6:30 a.m. on Tuesday, a day after the hotel checked out its last guest. The shutdown, the most spectacular and costly failure in Atlantic City's 36-year history of casino gambling, comes a little over two years after the $2.4-billion dollar Revel opened with high hopes of revitalizing the city's struggling gambling market.
MEL EVANS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The U.S. side of Niagara Falls, seen here Jan. 10, begins to thaw following the polar vortex earlier this year. Researchers have partially linked the cold weather from the vortexes to melting sea ice off Russia's coast, caused primarily by higher global temperatures. NICK LOVERDE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Polar vortex connected to melting ice in Arctic: Study

Frigid weather. Study says shrinking ice in Russian seas one cause of wicked cold fronts

A new study says that as the world gets warmer, parts of North America, Europe and Asia could see more frequent and stronger visits of cold air.

Researchers say that's because of shrinking ice in the seas off Russia. A reduced amount of ice would result in more energy going from the ocean into the air. That would weaken the atmospheric forces that usually keep cold air trapped in the Arctic.

At times the air escapes and wanders south, bringing with it a bit of Arctic super chill. That can happen for several reasons, the study says, such as when the ice in northern seas shrinks, leaving more water uncovered.

Normally, sea ice keeps heat energy from escaping the ocean and entering the atmosphere. When there's less ice, more energy gets into the atmosphere and weakens the jet stream, the high-altitude river of air that usually keeps Arctic air from wandering south, said study co-author Jin-Ho Yoon of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Wash.

The study observed historical data and conducted computer simulations.

Both approaches showed the same strong link between shrinking sea ice and cold outbreaks, according to lead author Baek-Min Kim, a research scientist at the Korea Polar Research Institute.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Response

- **Doubt.** Kevin Trenbeth, a climate analysis chief at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, is skeptical of Yoon's study, citing his own research that claims the Pacific has a greater effect on the polar vortex.
- **Acclaim.** Katherine Hayoe, a climate scientist with Texas Tech, praised Yoon's study and believes it provides important insights into how human activities affect the planet.

Polar bears

DNA fingerprinting a 'step forward' for animal studies

Polar bear scientists have developed a new way to study the mighty Arctic predator — pulling DNA off footprints left in the snow.

Fingerprinting a footprint could change, fundamentally, how researchers work with the bears by making it easier, cheaper and safer to study an animal that has become politically charged in the debate around climate change and Arctic development.

"This method allows us to sample DNA from the animal without having to see it," said Eva Bellemain of Spygen Inc., the French company behind the technique.

The method could be a big step forward in the quest for non-invasive ways to study animals, said Andrew Derocher, a polar bear biologist at the University of Alberta.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Spain

Courts order the release of detained British couple

Spanish officials have ordered the immediate release of a detained British couple who were wanted by police in the U.K. after they took their critically ill child for treatment abroad without doctors' consent.

The National Court in Madrid said in a statement that a judge released the couple Tuesday after British authorities dropped their case against them.

Brett and Naghemeh King were pursued by police after they took five-year-old Ashya out of a hospital in southern England and travelled to Spain against doctors' advice. The couple planned to sell property to pay for an expensive medical treatment, but were arrested on suspicion of cruelty to a person under the age of 16.

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Plane passengers turn on each other

Packed in like sardines.
As everything from leg room to toilets shrinks on planes, people are taking out their anger on fellow fliers

Squeezed into tighter and tighter spaces, airline passengers appear to be rebelling, taking their frustrations out on other fliers.

Three U.S. flights made unscheduled landings in the past nine days after passengers got into fights over the ability to recline their seats. Disputes over a tiny bit of personal space might seem petty, but for passengers whose knees are already banging into tray tables, every inch counts.

It's getting to the point where the pre-flight safety videos need an additional warning: Be nice to your neighbour.

The International Air Transport Association calls unruly passengers "an escalating problem," saying there was one incident for every 1,300 flights in the past three years. To boost their profits, airlines have been adding more rows of seats to planes in the past few years.

Southwest and United both took away one inch from each row on certain jets to make room for six more seats. American is increasing the number of seats on its Boeing 737-800s from 150 to 160. Delta installed new, smaller toilets in its 737-900s, enabling it to squeeze in an extra four seats. And to make room for a first-class cabin with lie-flat beds on its transcontinental flights, JetBlue cut one inch of leg room for coach passengers.

Airlines say passengers won't notice because the seats are being redesigned to create a sense of more space. Southwest's seats have thinner seatback magazine pockets, Alaska Airlines shrank the size of tray tables, and United moved the magazine pocket, getting it away from passengers' knees. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Losing elbow room, too

84%

Passengers aren't just losing leg room; they're losing elbow room. Airlines in the U.S. sold 84 per cent of their seats on domestic flights so far this year, up from 81 per cent five years ago and 74 per cent a decade ago, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. That means there are fewer and fewer empty middle seats on which passengers can spread out.

Nigel recommends you watch
Orange is the New Black
A privileged New Yorker ends up in a women's prison when a past crime catches up with her in this Emmy-winning series from the creator of "Weeds."
NETFLIX ORIGINAL
ORANGE the BLACK

Don't want everyone to know you've watched I Don't Know How She Does It?

This screenshot provided by Netflix shows what the viewer will see when subscribers recommend movies and TV shows to their Facebook friends. Until now, Netflix subscribers linking the service to their Facebook accounts automatically disclosed everything they were watching with a potentially wide-reaching range of people. The automatic disclosures ended Tuesday. A menu of friends culled from Facebook will appear after Netflix subscribers finish watching a video if they have turned on the sharing feature. NETFLIX/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Greenrush'

High demand for medical marijuana licences in Canada

The number of Canadian firms applying for lucrative medical marijuana licences has topped 1,000, as a so-called "greenrush" continues to overwhelm Health Canada.

So far, only two new licences have been approved this summer, even as the department tightens the application rules.

Health Canada says that as of Aug. 25, it had received 1,009 formal licence applications to grow medical weed since a call for proposals was issued last year, with 462 returned as incomplete, 201 rejected and 32 withdrawn. That still leaves almost 300 applications being assessed.

Some 13 licensed producers are actively providing medical marijuana to patients, while another nine Health Canada-approved producers are about to market their products.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 91.49¢ (-0.48¢)

TSX 15,619.08 (-6.65)

OIL $92.88 US (-$3.08)

GOLD $1,265.00 US (-$22.40)

Natural gas: $3.90 US (-$0.15)
Dow Jones: 17,067.56 (-30.89)

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HIPSTERS THAT ACTUALLY DESERVE THE HATE

JUST SAYIN'

Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

What with celebrity selfies and Vladimir Putin, you probably didn't think the world could get much weirder.

That's because you don't know about nipsters.

Allow me to plug your knowledge gap.

Nipsters are Nazi hipsters. As Vladimir Putin is Nikita Khrushchev 2.0, so nipsters are an update on neo-Nazi skinheads. Instead of jack boots and swastika armbands, nipsters sport skinny jeans, coloured glasses, messenger tote bags and beards.

You can watch German nipsters doing the Harlem Shake on YouTube, flashing signs that encourage the viewer to have unprotected sex with Nazis, which sounds so ... unclean.

Other signs in the video deplore multiculturalism, so it's clear that the unreconstructed hearts of xenophobes continue beating to a goose-stepping rhythm, with a little hip hop thrown in to bring things up to date.

Nipsters also favour animal rights and support environmental causes. There's even a neo-neo-Nazi vegan cooking show featuring two guys in the kitchen wearing balaclavas.

Rolling Stone published the full lowdown on nipsters earlier this summer in an article titled Heil Hipster: The Young Neo-Nazis Trying to Put a Stylish Face on Hate.

It's mainly based on an interview with a founder of the movement, Patrick Schroeder. Everything's on-trend about Patrick. He has his own webcast where he blends pop culture into hate culture in a way that is supposed to appeal to mainstream right-wing lunatics. In fact, he says, "If the definition of the nipster is someone who can live in the mainstream, then I see it as the future of the movement." He dismisses North American neo-Nazis as dressed up for a costume party. No style.

Despite the user-friendly front, Schroeder's ideological observations are distinctly paleo. He calls Barack Obama America's "neger president" and tells Rolling Stone journalist Thomas Rogers that black people don't belong in Germany because it's "against nature. There's a reason we're not walking around in the sun, in Ghana, with our skin colour."

All this would be horribly amusing if it weren't for the fact that racism is on the rise in Europe. And in echoes of Nazi Germany, according to the European Agency for Fundamental Rights, up to 90 per cent of all hate crimes in the European Union go unreported because respondents are afraid of social ostracism. It's OK to spout nipster nonsense, but it's not OK to report it?

Nipsters aren't the only xenophobic fungus growing on European culture. Recent anti-Semitic riots in France and Germany, on the surface a response to the Israel-Gaza conflict, have an ugly undercurrent of racism.

It's quite the monster mash-up. Hate is an equal opportunity disease. Fortunately, an effective vaccine exists. Love is all you need, and by love we don't mean unprotected sex with a Nazi.

Bárðarbunga-bunga

In this aerial view, fountains of lava, up to 60 metres high, spurt from a fissure in the ground on the north side of the Bárðarbunga volcano in Iceland on Tuesday. STEFANO DI NICOLO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Icelandic volcano starts to chill out after eruption

Experts say the seismic activity near the Bárðarbunga volcano in Iceland is calming down as tall fountains of fire and lava continue to lick the air along a volcanic fissure, producing a huge plume of steam and gas.

A massive white cloud some 4.5 kilometres tall was rising above the fissure eruption in the Holuhraun lava field north of the Dyngjujoekull glacier on Tuesday. No ash fall has been detected.

Iceland's meteorological agency said the lava eruption appears to be less active compared to the previous day.

Thousands of small earthquakes have rocked the region in recent days, leading to concerns that Bárðarbunga, which lies under a vast glacier, could erupt.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

By the numbers

300

The number of earthquakes in the area near the volcanic eruption on Tuesday. This is down from 500 on Monday.

MetroTube

He's not happy about September, either

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

Bad news, everybody. It's September — back to school for some of us, back to layers for all of us. So it's understandable that you might want to follow Benny the Bulldog's lead here and poke your head out of your long-weekend hole this morning and play peekaboo with pending autumn. (Benny The Bulldog/YouTube)

METRO PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

Twitter

@metropicks asked: 'Squirrel whisperer' Mary Krupa got Sneezy the Penn State Squirrel to pose for this very scholarly looking photo. Who would you send back to school?

@MrsMiggins1969: All the politicians who cut funding to schools and a increase class sizes. Let's see if they still think it's a good idea.

@friesron: Rob Ford. #nufsaid

metro AR

SEE THE NEWS COME ALIVE

In this issue, you can find AR enhancements on page 17 in Life.

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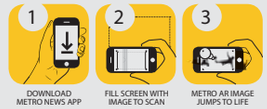

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SCENE

Dynamic duo Greenwood and Egoyan rock the movie screen

A history of hits.
Whether the script's about lap dancing or a kidnapped child, these two can be trusted to deliver movie magic

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

Bruce Greenwood GETTY IMAGES

Bruce Greenwood first met director Atom Egoyan in a singles bar. "Atom was alone in the corner and I felt sorry for him," says Greenwood. "We were introduced by a mutual friend."

That was in the early 1990s, when Egoyan was on the brink of international acclaim as a director and Greenwood was a film and television star with a handful of movies and recurring roles on St. Elsewhere and Knots Landing under his belt.

That chance meeting led to their first film together, Exotica, a study of loneliness and desire in a lap-dancing club that Roger Ebert called "a deep, painful film" in his four-star review.

"We became good friends during that process," said Greenwood, "and in the ensuing years."

Three years later the pair collaborated on The Sweet Hereafter, an adaptation of the novel of the same name by Russell Banks about the effects of a tragic bus accident on the population of a small town. Greenwood earned a Genie Award nomination playing a grieving father and in 2002 readers of Playback voted it the greatest Canadian film ever made.

Next was a small role in Ararat, Egoyan's story of a young man whose life is changed during the making of a film about the Armenian genocide, and then, in 2013, a cameo in Devil's Knot. Greenwood played a judge in Egoyan's retelling of the events leading up to the West Memphis Three murders and the "Satanic panic" that fuelled the hysteria surrounding the subsequent trial of teenagers Jessie Misskelley Jr., Damien Echols and Jason Baldwin.

These days Greenwood is best known for his work as Capt. Christopher Pike in the 2009 Star Trek film and its sequel, Star Trek Into Darkness, but he's not too busy in Hollywood — the Quebec-born actor has lived in Los Angeles since the late 1980s — to reteam with his Canadian cohort.

In Egoyan's new psychological thriller, The Captive, Greenwood joins stars Ryan Reynolds, Scott Speedman, Rosario Dawson and Mireille Enos in a story of a child kidnapping. Egoyan says he and Greenwood share a shorthand that makes for easy work on set.

As for Greenwood, he says he trusts the director, "more than anyone I've ever worked with. He can ask me to do anything and if my initial instinct is 'Oh no,' it ends up being the right idea. He's a tremendous guy."

Director Atom Egoyan's new psychological thriller, The Captive, centres around a child kidnapping. CONTRIBUTED

Quoted

"(I trust him) more than anyone I've ever worked with. He can ask me to do anything and if my initial instinct is 'Oh no,' it ends up being the right idea. He's a tremendous guy."

Actor Bruce Greenwood
on director Atom Egoyan

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Felix Buxton, left, and Simon Ratcliffe — a.k.a. Basement Jaxx — have just released their new album, Junto. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Basement Jaxx find their 'thing' is happy sounds

Junto. For years the duo struggled to find something that defined their act; their new album may do just that

Basement Jaxx aren't usually associated with restful breathers.

But the high-energy British electronic dance innovators have in fact been more or less dormant the past five years, the longest break between full-length recordings of their long career.

Over that five-year span, the pair watched from the sidelines as EDM exploded — and as longtime friends and cohorts in the chrome-plated pair Daft Punk mined platinum records and Grammy gold.

Such headlining success has eluded Basement Jaxx over their 20 years together. The pair has won a Grammy, but never *the* Grammy, and they've had hits — most notably 2001's adrenaline rush Where's Your Head At? — but they've done so somewhat anonymously, with a tough-to-pin-down sensibility dedicated to globe-trotting and genre-hopping.

It's led to joyously spontaneous creations like their latest album, Junto. But their lack of a defining visual or aural esthetic might have hurt the duo when it comes to building a mass following.

"It hasn't helped us at all," said Felix Buxton during a recent promotional whisk through Toronto. "It's just, like, made people confused. 'I thought Basement Jaxx was some black girls. Who are Basement Jaxx anyway? Because I've seen a couple videos of different people in different styles on different songs.'

"From a marketing point of view, it hasn't helped us at all."

"As far as a picture or photo," chimed in partner Simon Ratcliffe, "yeah, some helmets or something —"

"Would help," finished Buxton.

"Would *really* help," agreed Ratcliffe.

Indeed, marketing dance music to American audiences seems to succeed most often when a hit tune is tethered to something tangible, like an engaging singer or an outsized gimmick (Daft Punk's robotic getup; Deadmau5's various headwear).

In 2009, the duo unleashed an avalanche of material in a way they describe as somewhat haphazard.

The separate albums Scars and Zephyr amounted to nearly 85 minutes of new music. They also amounted to the end of Basement Jaxx's recording contract with XL Recordings, and to hear the pair tell it now, there seemed to be some mutual fatigue fogging that relationship.

"The Zephyr one we actually initially stuck on with Scars (as a double album), and the record company said, 'Don't do a double album because that's a bit Spinal Tap. You're going all progressive. People will definitely not be interested,"' recalled Buxton. "So we put that out afterwards, and I think we basically agreed that no one would market it or anything, but at least could it be available? That was all we asked. It can exist. That's it.

"It didn't seem to be fashionable. And actually after that, the orchestral album, (2011's) Basement Jaxx vs. Metropole Orkest, that wasn't marketed either, because that wasn't fashionable. It was a time to not worry about fashion and what people wanted and just do some things."

So Buxton "moved house," read a book on feng shui and spent probably a month sifting through a roomful of vinyl and disposing of thousands and thousands of records. He assessed and tossed away knick-knacks and souvenirs accrued over 20 years of touring the world, and perhaps that process influenced the album's restless globalism.

Every track practically features its own style, marrying their pop house to sounds from Jamaica, Chicago, Brazil, London and Houston. As has been the case on experimental past efforts, some measure of cohesion is achieved because of a common mood, one of joy and optimistic adventure.

"(Music) seems pointless unless it's doing something positive," Buxton said.

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BCIT PART-TIME STUDIES

Is Jack coming back?

Plans for 24 movie resurface

Following the finale of 24: Live Another Day, the miniseries that stood in as the show's belated ninth season, producers have returned to the idea of bringing Jack Bauer's adventures to the big screen, TV Line reveals.

According to the website, 24 producer Brian Grazer has developed a pitch that he plans to present to 20th Century Fox. The studio, however, is said to be more interested in producing additional miniseries such as the one aired this summer. The idea of a movie on the counter-terrorist agent has been in discussion since the show ended its eighth season in May 2010. AFP

Kiefer Sutherland stars in 24. GABRIEL BOUYS/AFP

Season 5

Downton Abbey trailer hints at romance, fire

ITV has unveiled the first trailer for the next season of Downton Abbey, which premieres Sept. 21 in the U.K.

The fifth season is poised to be an eventful one for the protagonists. In its new video, the British network hints at romance — as Lady Mary grows closer to Lord Gillingham and the footman Jimmy Kent pursues his forbidden love affairs — as well as drama, as Lord Grantham fears that his grandson is about to be stolen from the family. There is also a shot that hints that a terrible fire may break out at the estate.

The new season, which is written once again by the show's creator Julian Fellowes, is set in 1924 and finds the family coping with reforms carried out by the first Labour government. AFP

Film editor Thelma Schoonmaker received a Golden Lion award for lifetime achievement Tuesday during the 71st Venice Film Festival. GABRIEL BOUYS/AFP

Golden Lion. Film editor scores achievement award

Oscar-winning film editor Thelma Schoonmaker, who has worked hand-in-hand with director Martin Scorsese for over 40 years, was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement in Venice on Tuesday.

The 74-year-old American has edited some of the biggest selling and critically acclaimed movies of the past 30 years, from Goodfellas to Gangs of New York and The Wolf of Wall Street, and only works with Scorsese.

After winning Oscars for Raging Bull, The Aviator and The Departed, Schoonmaker said she was honoured to be awarded the top Venice accolade — and to be the first film editing artist to receive it in the festival's history.

"I had started a six-week course at NYU (New York University) in editing when I first met Marty, and it changed my life," Schoonmaker told journalists at the world's oldest film festival ahead of the ceremony on Lido island in Italy's floating city. AFP

Frances McDormand. Star of new miniseries feted

The Venice Film Festival has feted the career of Frances McDormand, the Oscar-winning actress of Fargo fame, ahead of the premiere of a new HBO miniseries she called the culmination of her life's work.

McDormand, who is married to director Joel Coen and has starred in several Coen brothers films including Fargo and Burn After Reading, was presented with the Visionary Talent Award for a career that began on Broadway in 1984.

The 57-year-old American told journalists ahead of the ceremony that she felt developing, producing and acting in the four-part miniseries Olive Kitteridge was "the culmination of everything that I have attempted to do."

Frances McDormand, who produces and acts in Olive Kitteridge, received the Visionary Talent Award at the Venice Film Festival. GABRIEL BOUYS/AFP

McDormand plays a witty, acerbic math teacher in a New England town in a story that spans 25 years, based on a Pulitzer prize-winning collection of short stories by Elizabeth Strout, and directed by Lisa Cholodenko. Television has "allowed all of us to reinvent on our own terms what we want our professional lives to be," she said. "For a female elder, action roles in films are limited, but television opens up new possibilities." AFP

Quoted

"I think 90 minutes is not enough to tell a female story. I think four hours is enough, six hours is better, 10 hours, two years... Our stories are circular, complex and need more than 90 minutes." Frances McDormand

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Al Spx, a.k.a. Cold Specks. STEVE GULLICK/ARTS & CRAFTS

Specks' siren songs seduce famous fans

Dark matter. Canadian singer lures listeners with her soulful sound

Latest offering

"It's sonically playful but thematically the record is still fairly dark."

Singer Cold Specks describes her latest album, Neuroplasticity, released this week

Al Spx wrote her first album as Cold Specks in a closet and her second while holed up in a cottage in the dead of winter in Somerset, England. She jokingly described the resulting sound as "doom soul" and the label stuck as a succinct way to describe her haunting melodies.

So why is her music so dark?

"I have no idea — I'm trying to figure that out myself," the 26-year-old singer who goes by a pseudonym said with a laugh.

Dressed in all black accessorized with a gold collar necklace and muted red lips, she orders a lavender butterfly tea at Luna Café in Toronto as she talks about her latest musical offering, being released this week.

"I think this record demonstrates a more realized sound for Cold Specks," she said. "It's sonically playful but thematically the record is still fairly dark."

Her 2012 record, I Predict a Graceful Expulsion, gained popularity in the U.K. and was nominated for the Polaris Music Prize and a Juno here at home. But performing the record while touring for two years left her feeling like a "bad actress," she said.

"I got frustrated with the sparseness of the first one," she said.

Spx wanted the new album to have a fuller sound and carefully chose the first single off Neuroplasticity to reflect this.

"Absisto was the first song that I started writing and last song that I finished," Spx said. "It showed the growth of the project, so I thought it was the best song to have out first."

The single garnered critical acclaim soon after its release.

"With a sorceress's voice that recalls the seriousness of Odetta and Nina Simone, Cold Specks intones about emptied ammunition and fools not suffered gladly," wrote the Globe and Mail's Brad Wheeler. "She frightens and beckons at once — a scary young package of contradictions."

This frightening and beckoning quality was captured in the music video for the song, which was shot in Toronto by director Ian Pons Jewell, featuring military ghosts haunting an eerily lit forest.

"Directors seem to enjoy putting me in occult situations — I've just rolled with it," Spx said. "I'm not one to focus on visual elements. I just write songs."

Those songs have attracted some famous fans. She was invited to perform at Joni Mitchell's 70th birthday tribute at Massey Hall last year and collaborated with Moby on his latest album. Both Spx and Moby are on the label Mute in the U.S. and when Daniel Miller, who runs Mute, told Moby about Cold Specks, he invited her to his house in L.A. to work on a song.

"It was a very collaborative, creative, fun experience and he's a wonderful man," she said of her label-mate.

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George Clooney ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Years-old injury still bringing George pain

George Clooney is still feeling the effects of a back injury he suffered on the set of Syriana almost 10 years ago and recently visited a hospital in Dusseldorf, Germany, to address the ongoing pain, according to E! News. "George arrived at the clinic Friday morning and had a series of tests with the clinic's top neurosurgeon, Dr. Ralf Buhl," a source says. "Buhl specializes in non-invasive methods, which lessen the need for surgery." The injury is believed to have caused ongoing spinal cord problems and bad headaches. See? So it's not necessarily just the Daily Mail that's made him so grumpy lately.

Miley Cyrus

Miley still loves Liam Hemsworth (and weed)

Miley Cyrus may have broken off her engagement to Liam Hemsworth almost a year ago, but that doesn't mean she doesn't still have feelings for the Australian actor. "I love Liam. Liam loves me," she tells Australia's Sunday Night during an interview. Of course, she might just be saying that because she doesn't want to upset any Australians on their home turf.

On the more controversial topic of her open indulgence in drugs and alcohol, Cyrus gets a bit defensive: "I put pictures of me smoking weed, I'm not going to lie, on my Instagram," she says. "I don't promote it in my songs or whatever, but it's not like I'm sitting around telling a bunch of kids to do a bunch of drugs."

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

'I do not have a perfect body,' says Charlize. Yeah, right.

NED EHRBAR
Metro in Hollywood

We've been thinking a lot about famous women's bodies this week, obviously, so here's some food for thought to go with all that virtual ogling. Oscar winner Charlize Theron, generally regarded to be pretty darn beautiful, has a few flaws.

"I do not have a perfect body," she tells Modern Luxury magazine. "I'm always finding things I can work on, but I definitely reached a point where I feel comfortable and happy with the way my body looks." Oh, good. I was worried. I mean, if she can't feel comfortable with how she looks, what hope do the rest of us have?

"I like to think I am a woman who is comfortable (with) and celebratory of my strengths and indulges in the qualities that make me feel beautiful," she says, apparently not done yet.

"I definitely am not one of those people that is constantly counting calories and doesn't allow myself to enjoy food — I love food. But I just try to be mindful of what I eat and be good to myself."

Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm going to go be good to myself with this deep-dish pizza.

Soul-searching in New Zealand

Spiritual trip. Epically ethereal landscapes and a history drenched in mythology make this island nation a must for meditators

KATHY ULLYOTT
life@metronews.ca

New Zealand's beauty can bring out the spiritual in visitors. Scan this image with your Metro News app to see pictures of a journey through New Zealand that's guaranteed to stir the soul. ERIC LINDBERG

The largest kauri tree in the world, Tane Mahuta. JAMES HEREMALA

In his stout workboots and black oilskin duster, Bill Matthews looks more like a sheep rancher than a Maori sage and storyteller. Yet, by the time he has collected me at the Copthorne Hokianga Hotel and we've arrived at a dizzying lookout over Hokianga Harbour near the tip of New Zealand's North Island, he has summoned the ancient world of the country's first peoples — his ancestors — and brought to life their legends of creation and conquest.

At the verge of the fabled Waipoua Forest — a primeval rainforest and sanctuary for the vast, native Kauri trees — twilight is now filtering through the silver ferns, symbol of New Zealand and as big as rooftops.

When we finally meet the forest celebrities, Te Matua Ngahere (Father of the Forest) and 2,000-year-old Tane Mahuta (Lord of the Forest), it's full dark, and Bill's stories of the Maori's journey from their mythical homeland of Hawaiki, their discovery of Aotearoa, the Land of the Long White Cloud, and even of how Tane Mahuta created the world seem as real as the nighttime calls of the tui and kiwi, and as divine as smouldering kauri resin.

Think of a spiritual journey, and you might first think of the mystical destinations of India or the Holy Land. Increasingly, however, seekers of renewal, enlightenment and self-discovery are drawn to New Zealand — a land of epically ethereal landscapes, rich mythological history and soul-satisfying remoteness.

It's not surprising, really, that the misty ranges, bubbling hot springs and vast forests that were such inherently sacred sites for the Maori have, in more recent years, inspired and attracted pilgrims of all spiritual stripes.

"Being in the Southern Alps, on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, there is a real sense of spirituality and calmness," says Paula Ryan, co-creator of the new, 21-acre Aro-Ha Wellness Retreat near Queenstown.

Although it's been open less than a year and hosts a maximum of 20 guests at once, Aro-Ha is making international waves for its luxury accommodation, rigour (paleo-based vegan cuisine) and permaculture (a focus on ecological, sustainable design).

At Aro-Ha, "every guest has a personal experience and they all leave feeling increased objectivity and more clarity," says Ryan.

In addition to mindfulness and other spirituality sessions, Aro-Ha focuses on nutrition and what it calls wellness adventures: sub-alpine hiking, strength training, kayaking and twice-daily yoga sessions.

Further north and overlooking New Zealand's most populous city, the Auckland Zen Garden offers an entirely different landscape, but a similarly contemplative experience, personalized for each guest. Owner Johnny Leung, who designed the 75-acre Garden with rippling streams, private lodges and contemplative walks in the ancient Kyoto style, says he wants guests to "feel close to the sky and heaven."

In addition to yoga and meditation sessions, a maximum of 14 guests take part in two- to four-day retreats complete with the services, if desired, of psychiatrists and "soul consultants," who guide individuals seeking to reset their priorities or make major life changes, says Leung.

Interestingly, one of Aro-Ha's guests used almost identical language: "Aro-Ha isn't a life saver; it's a life changer."

But Bill Matthews showed that quests for perspective, insight and priority aren't necessarily new. As we left Waipoua Forest, he leaned over, felt the ground for a kauri seed, and presented it to me with a traditional ancient Maori message. "You are a seed. Even though you are small, you have value."

Maori Immersion

Museums, cultural centres and special events throughout New Zealand will give you a great introduction to Maori history and culture, but if you want to jump in feet first, check out Potiki Adventures.

The company is the passion and brainchild of Bianca Ranson of Waiheki Island, who started it 10 years ago when she was just 24 and has since won a clutch of awards for it.

Her aims: to further Maori traditions among Maori youth, and also to give Pakeha (non-Maori people) a hands-on experience of Maori activities, perspectives and spirituality. Guests stay in the Marae, a traditional ancestral meeting house, visit historical paa (power) sites and participate in activities such as flax weaving, poi-making and mau rakau (martial arts).

For more information: potikiadventures.co.nz

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As a special end-of-summer gift to our readers, Metro brings you the first chapter of The Afterlife of Stars, the newest book by award-winning author Joseph Kertes. Over the next three days, we will be introduced to the Beck brothers, two young boys grappling with the world around them as Russian tanks roll into Budapest during the final days of the Hungarian revolution. In **Part 2** of four, the Beck family has an encounter with Russian soldiers in their home.

The Afterlife of Stars

There was a pounding at the door, quite a commanding one, and we all looked out that way, as if to interpret what it meant. We followed my father into the vestibule and huddled behind him, except for my brother, who stood by his side. It was Attila who opened the door. A man, a soldier the size of a tree, stood outside. He had such an overgrowth of beard, he could have supplied a whole room of teenagers with all the tufts they needed. He barked something at us in Russian. The red star gleamed from his furry officer's cap. He barked something again, and Judit squeaked and held her stomach.

The tree man paused, but then he parted us and stepped up to Judit. He looked at her, gazed down at her belly, then bent down to listen there. No one knew what to do. He pointed a long brown finger at her abdomen. Andras looked ready to lunge at the Russian, and so did my brother behind him. Judit whimpered.

The man laughed as he straightened all the way up again. His mouth was like a jewel box, full of gold and glitter. He pushed past us and marched straight to our empire clock on the sideboard in the front room as if he knew where it was. We followed him, and he waited for us to gather. He pointed to the clock, circled his long brown finger a number of times past the twelve and motioned that we were all to leave. Then, to our relief, the officer marched out again and slammed the door.

"We have until three o'clock," our father said to us, "and then we have to be gone."

"For how long?" I asked him.

"We don't know," my grandmother said gently.

"For about two centuries," Attila said, "before we check back in with them."

"What do you mean?"

"They want us to get out," Andras said. "Not out of the country. We're not supposed to leave the country, not *allowed*, actually. We're just supposed to find other lodgings somewhere."

"But we're not doing that," Attila said.

"Be quiet," our father said.

metro AR "One solitary picture still hung on the wall among the ghostly rectangles. It was a drawing done by my brother of a Spitfire fighter plane tearing through the skies ..." Scan this photo with your Metro News app for a video of Joseph Kertes talking about his new book! ISTOCK

Judit whispered, "We can't leave now." I could hardly hear her.

"We have to," her husband said. "Now is our only chance. The Hungarian rebel army is rising up. There are breaks in the border. It's the only time."

"But Andras ..." our grandmother said, putting her arm around Judit.

My brother looked straight at me. "We're leaving," he insisted. "Forever. I told you — we're going west."

"Why can't we just get the Russians to like us instead?" I asked.

Attila shook his head. "Lambkin, you're not too bright." But my remark made Judit tear up. She embraced me and kissed me on the head before leaving with Andras.

The Russian was back within an hour, and he brought other soldiers with him, two women and one man. But the original one with the beard was obviously overseeing the proceedings. They moved through our home more like movers than invaders. They acted as if we weren't there. From the china cabinet, they gingerly removed Herendi porcelain cups, saucers and platters and a silver sugar box and teapot, wrapping them in cloth before placing them in large canvas sacks. Attila and I watched from the sofa.

They took down the paintings one at a time, leaving rectangular blond ghosts in the gold wallpaper. The largest of these was called "Christmas, 1903." It depicted two old women dressed in dark coats and fur hats, one bent over a walnut secretary desk, writing a letter, the other looking out and down at us from the wall. Between them stood a potted Christmas tree on a table, festooned with bright ribbons and baubles and a star at the top. I always wondered why such a cheerful tree did not manage to spread its joy to the dark women in the parlor, who had most likely decorated it. Now the women were gone, together with their tree.

One solitary picture still hung on the wall among the ghostly rectangles. It was a drawing done by my brother of a Spitfire fighter plane tearing through the skies, spitting impressive bursts of fire. In the corner of the picture was the sun, and it too fired off spikes instead of rays of light. It was a sketch Attila had done in school, and our mother had had it framed in gold and hung over the gilded double-headed-eagle clock on the sideboard, which stood guard over the room. The fierce-looking bird was the emblem of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

I had done a picture I knew my mother would like too, a watercolor, but it was still at school. My teacher, Mrs. Molnar, had hung it up where the photographs of Stalin and Khrushchev hung, but on the opposite side of the clock. My painting featured a weeping willow. It was surrounded by impressionable trees, which also wanted to weep, so I gave them their own tears in many colors flying off the leaves. My classmate David thought the other trees might have been sweating after a run, but I explained my intent.

A year before, I had done another picture in crayon of sunflowers. It wasn't a field of sunflowers, exactly, but sunflower after sunflower, quite a few of them. My brother seemed to admire the picture. He said my flowers looked like the handiwork of God as a child, trying out designs for the sun. That wasn't my intent either. I don't know where that picture got to, exactly.

One of the Russian women carrying a canvas bag looked at the Spitfire twice as she passed by us. We watched her closely. She removed her snug army cap to reveal straw-colored hair tied back as tightly as the cap, giving her head the look of an onion. She paused by the drawing but moved on. The eagle watched with its four sharp eyes. On her third trip by, she picked up the eagle clock with a strong arm and wrapped it up like a mummy before bending over to make room for it in her heavy sack.

Attila watched the operation, kept glancing up at his own drawing in its precious frame, waited for her to leave our home with the sacks, and then tore off madly to our room.

I tiptoed to the dining room to see if the Russians had taken our bowl of rose cream chocolates. I cared less about the red crystal bowl than about the chocolates. They were still there. I wondered if it would be all right to sit at the table and steal a chocolate. I took a chance. I peeled the red foil wrapper off the delicacy and put it into my mouth whole, let its creamy sweet essence enjoy its new home. I didn't want to chew, to take a single bite. I put my cheek down on the cool surface of the dining room table. My grandmother had bought this table for my parents for their "wood" anniversary, she told me. She said it was made of walnut by Sebastyan Balaban, the famous furniture maker. He had told her it would last a thousand years. We had had it for eleven years, just 1.1 percent of its lifespan, meaning some nice Russian family could enjoy meals and chocolates off it for 989 more years. I took another chocolate to eat in my room and one for my brother.

But I had a second table to visit first. It was the round-topped pedestal table in the front room. It was the one I hid under when I was in turmoil. Made of heavy black maple and standing on beastly wooden lions' paws, it sat between two dainty ladies' lamps in all its manly glory. I ducked underneath. I wanted to sit in its darkness one last time. When I was much younger, I thought that this unlucky lion had grown a table-top instead of a head, but when my brother taught me the facts of life, I realized that a lion and a table had lain down together to make this child. I hoped it was the table that was the mother. I ran my fingers through the carved fur and the hard claws and said my goodbyes.

I heard something fall in the kitchen, but not a dish, because it didn't shatter. I jumped out and ran back to our room. I found my brother holding his june bug collection up to the light of the window before shelving it again. The collection had won him a science prize a couple of years back.

On the shelves

Get the book!

• Joseph Kertes' The Afterlife of Stars (Penguin Canada, $22.95) is now on sale and is available in bookstores across Canada!

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Online only

We have more on The Afterlife of Stars at metronews.ca

- **Video.** Metro columnist Richard Crouse interviews Joseph Kertes about his new book and the creative process.
- **Author talk.** Have a question for Joseph Kertes? The author will be hosting an online live chat on Thursday, Sept. 4 starting at 1 p.m. EST. You can submit your questions in advance at metronews.ca.

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Post-secondary. Get ready to ace this school year with these secrets to success

Whether you're heading into your first-ever round of post-secondary education or returning to school for even more time in the classroom, it's important to start with a strong foundation.

There's a lot of new information to absorb, and you may find it all a little overwhelming. Not really sure how to make the best of the next few years? Start with these steps.

Get organized

As a new student, this post-secondary adventure may be the first time you've had to learn without the structure of the school bell — or a high level of engagement from parents or peers.

If you're a returning student, you may have forgotten how easy it is to overlook key dates or lose track of important information. Find a method that helps you keep track of your class schedule and other commitments, whether it's an agenda, digital calendar, app or some combination of all three.

Getting organized isn't just a good way to stay productive. It can also help you identify spare time you have left over for other activities.

Get involved

Your post-secondary experience will go by in a flash. Make the most of that time by getting involved — this experience can be incredibly valuable when you face the school-to-work transition.

Working on or off campus is a great way to gain some extra money while building work experience, while volunteer work can enable you to pursue a personal commitment and build new connections to your community.

Both kinds of involvement allow you to build meaningful experience. They offer evidence of your time management and teamwork skills and will be a definite asset when you are looking for work.

Another way to get involved is to join or create a club. This is a good way to meet new people on campus while demonstrating some initiative and leadership.

Build relationships with your profs

You'll have many opportunities to make new friends at school, but don't forget to focus on building relationships in other areas, too.

Networking with instructors may sound like a task for a teacher's pet, but it's important to make connections outside of your peer group where you can. Connecting with your instructors can help you uncover promising positions (as a research assistant, for example) and position you for success if you plan on heading to grad school.

Of course, your instructors teach hundreds (if not thousands) of students, so it's important to be mindful of their time. As with any effective networking, make sure you have a specific goal — and aren't wasting anyone's time or overstepping boundaries.

Attend on-campus events

Take a break from the books every now and then to get involved by participating in and attending on-campus events. This is a great way for you to meet new people and de-stress.

Developing new interests and connecting with new people will expand your horizons and get a better sense of where you'd like to go in the future.

By taking advantage of some of the tips above, you'll have a more fully rounded school experience and be better prepared to enter the working world upon graduation.

LAUREN MARINIGH/TALENTEGG.CA

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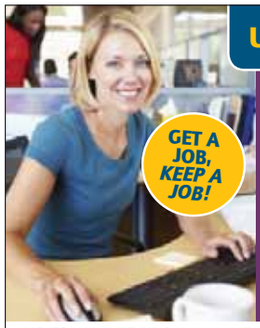

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Feeling swamped? Get organized and score a great job

Job hunting can be stressful. Whether you are a new grad looking for a career or a student in search of a part-time job, it can be hard to keep your applications straight — and your motivation high. Getting your job search (and those applications) organized is a great way to avoid confusion and stay on top of important deadlines.

Use spreadsheets

If you're actively applying to different jobs, you may have trouble keeping track of all the information you're juggling.

To begin organizing your job search, start with a spreadsheet or a blank document.

In this document, create headings that include the name of the place you applied to or contacted, the job title, the date you applied, who you applied to or how you applied, and any other important information as outlined in the job description. This spreadsheet will help you track everything pertinent to your job hunt.

Tip: Use this spreadsheet to save the descriptions of jobs you've applied to — you'll want that information to prepare for an interview.

Organize your applications

As you apply for new jobs, it's important to keep all your resumés and cover letters in one place, and keep them organized.

If you get a call back for an interview, you want to be able to bring copies of the cover letter and resumé you submitted for the job. Create a folder on your computer, and within that, create a new folder for every new job you apply to. Label your files appropriately with the job title and company applied to.

Tip: This seems obvious to an organized person — but it's an important step many job-seekers overlook.

Use your calendar

If you have a lot of job search momentum, it's easy to get dates confused, or overlook relevant follow-up dates. Marking key dates on your calendar is the best way to streamline your applications. When you submit an application, make note of any relevant dates, particularly the expected closing date or time-frame for hearing back from the employer. This step is crucial in making sure to follow up and reach out to recruiters in an appropriate time frame.

Tip: Some job descriptions clearly state to not follow up; make note of this.

Plan short- and long-term goals

It's easy to get tunnel vision when you're trying to hatch your career. As you plan and organize your applications and key dates, set aside some time to review your progress and identify new goal-setting opportunities. It's good to be prepared for unexpected setbacks, and having some key dates set aside as opportunities to rest and recharge is absolutely crucial to your continued success.

Tip: Planning your activities long-term will help you stay motivated if you don't meet with immediate job-search success. LAUREN MARINIGH/TALENTEGG.CA

Is the stress of job hunting getting to you? Organizing your applications — both digital and paper-based — can help you stay on track. ISTOCK

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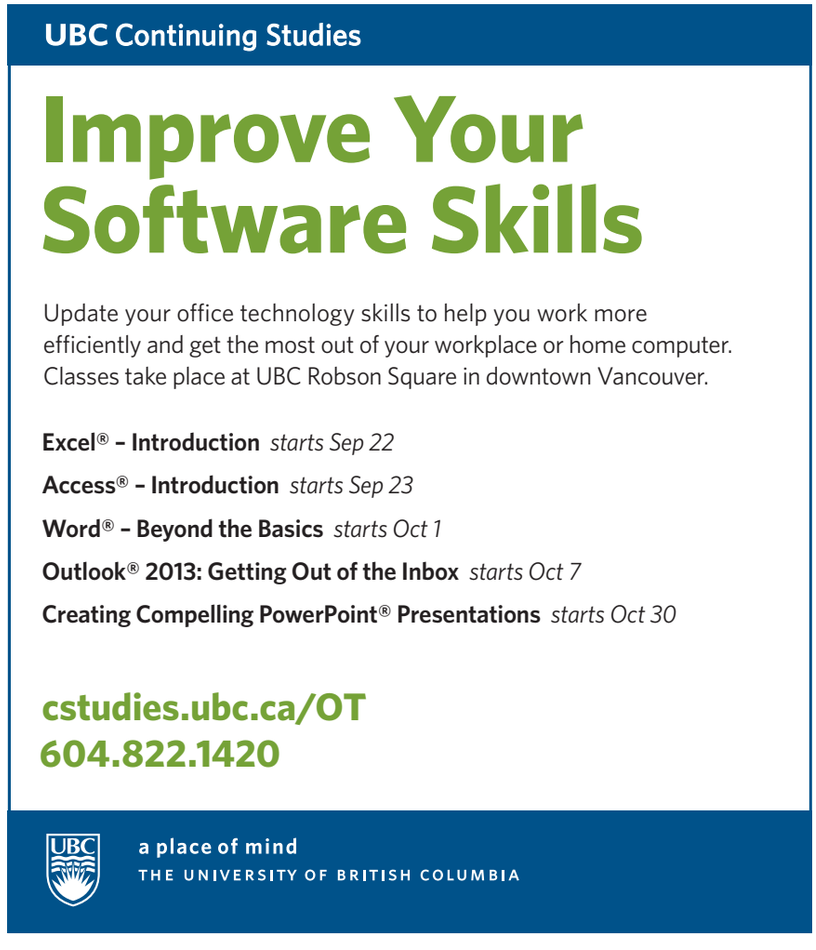
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Fresh tomatoes in salad spotlight

Grilled Chicken Panzanella Salad.
This dish makes a light dinner and allows you to switch up protein

DINNER EXPRESS
Emily Richards
food@metronews.ca

September is a great month to enjoy tomatoes in so many ways.

Cooking them up in a sauce or in a soup makes for easy meals, but one of my favourites is including them in salads. Putting together some family favourites creates a whole entree salad that everyone will love.

For this Grilled Chicken Panzanella Salad, my family prefers chicken thighs, but you can also use leftover chicken or turkey to speed up prep time.

If you are using leftover chicken or turkey, you will need about three cups (750 ml) chopped or shredded.

You can also substitute three to four boneless skinless chicken breasts for the thighs. Grill them for about 12 minutes or until no longer pink inside.

1. Toss chicken thighs with 1 tbsp of oil, and sprinkle with half each of the salt and pepper. Place on greased grill over medium-high heat and grill for about 10 minutes, turning once or until juices run clear. Place on cutting board and chop.

2. Toss bread with remaining oil, salt and pepper and spread onto baking sheet. Toast in 400 F (200 C) oven for about 10 minutes or until bread is crispy and golden.

3. In bowl, combine tomatoes, cucumber, red and yellow peppers, onion, basil and capers, if using. Add chicken and bread; toss to combine.

4. Dressing: In bowl, whisk together vinegar, broth, garlic, mustard, salt and pepper. Drizzle over salad and toss well. Let stand 30 minutes before serving.

Ingredients

- 6 boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 1 1/2 lbs/750 g)
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) each salt and pepper
- 4 cups (1 l) cubed crusty Italian bread
- 2 large tomatoes, chopped
- 1 English cucumber, sliced
- 1 each red and yellow pepper, chopped
- Half red onion, thinly sliced (optional)
- 1/2 cup (125 ml) fresh basil, coarsely chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) capers, drained (optional)

Dressing

- 1/4 cup (50 ml) aged balsamic vinegar
- 3 tbsp (45 ml) sodium-reduced chicken broth
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp (5 ml) Dijon mustard
- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) each salt and pepper

This recipe makes six servings. EMILY RICHARDS

Whitecaps' summer swoon strikes again

Drought. Shut out in four of last four matches, 'Caps lurk out of playoff contention

CAM TUCKER
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There was a gloomy feel to Vancouver Whitecaps training on Tuesday, and that had little to do with the soggy weather.

The local Major League Soccer club is once again in a battle for a playoff position, but yet again in another summer swoon. It's a familiar situation, one the club couldn't recover from last year, costing it a post-season berth.

Most recently, the Whitecaps sputtered in a 3-0 loss to their Cascadia Cup rivals, the Portland Timbers, in front of the home crowd at BC Place Stadium.

The Whitecaps are now sixth in the Western Conference standings, and one point out of the fifth and final playoff position.

The club has gone three straight games without scoring a goal. It has been shut out in four of its last six games.

Since the schedule resumed out of the World Cup break in June, goals have been exceedingly difficult to come by for the Whitecaps.

Because the goals have dried up, the Whitecaps have just two wins since the start of July.

The Whitecaps are without a proven goal-scorer up front, with the departures of Camilo Sanvezzo and Kenny Miller.

Speedy players like Erik Hurtado, a sophomore in MLS, and Darren Mattocks, in his third season, have had tremendous flashes of brilliance, enough to give rise to optimism they could indeed be that go-to guy to fill the net.

Kekuta Manneh, also in his second year, goes into the same category.

Individually, those players — 23-year-old Hurtado, 24-year-old Mattocks, and 19-year-old Manneh, have also endured cold spells.

"Over the course of the season, you know that with youth comes adversity and that's what we're suffering right now," said Whitecaps president Bob Lenarduzzi.

"We're not going to abandon the long-term plans simply because things have, almost predictably, gone a way that you would expect when you have young players."

Whitecaps' goalkeeper David Ousted, looks on as Portland Timbers' Fanendo Adi, celebrates a goal in Vancouver on Saturday. The boal has been going into the wrong net too often for the 'Caps lately. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"You know that with youth comes adversity and that's what we're suffering right now."

Whitecaps' president Bob Lenarduzzi

CFL

Lions strike extension deal with Cord Parks through 2015

The B.C. Lions have locked up a member of their defensive backs unit through the 2015 season, after signing Cord Parks to a contract extension in a deal announced Tuesday.

Parks, 27, is in his second Canadian Football League season. He signed with the Lions as a free agent in May of 2013, and emerged as a force on the B.C. defence. He recorded six interceptions and was named a West Division all-star in his rookie year.

The Lions head out on the road to play the Ottawa RedBlacks on Friday. METRO

Northwest League

Canadians series pushed by one day due to rain

Game 1 of the North Division final between the Vancouver Canadians and Spokane Indians, scheduled for Tuesday night at Nat Bailey Stadium, was postponed due to rain.

According to the Canadians' website, Game 1 of the series has now been re-scheduled for Wednesday at 7:05 p.m. PT at Nat Bailey. Game 2 is now scheduled to go Thursday in Spokane, and, if necessary, Game 3 goes Friday in Spokane.

The winner of this series advances to the Northwest League short-season Single-A championship series. METRO

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Federer back in quarter-finals with confidence

U.S. Open. Swiss star defeats 17th-seeded Agut in straight sets

Roger Federer pumps his fist after winning the second set against Roberto Bautista Agut on Tuesday night. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A year ago at this time, Roger Federer was dealing with a bad back. He was experimenting with new rackets. And his nine-year run of reaching at least the quarter-finals at the U.S. Open ended with a fourth-round loss.

Things are different these days for the 33-year-old Federer.

Enjoying a new racket with a larger head and healthy enough to train properly and push forward whenever possible, Federer got back to the quarter-finals on Tuesday night at Flushing Meadows with a 6-4, 6-3, 6-2 victory over 17th-seeded Roberto Bautista Agut of Spain.

"Because of the issues I had last year, I had to be unbelievably careful what I did. We had to cut back on a few things I usually would do, but (was) scared to do. That was not what I wanted to do," Federer said about his fitness work. "Sometimes if that's what it is and it means don't run on the treadmill or don't do jumps or whatever it is, well, there's other ways you can train that. I'm happy that basically today I can do whatever and I don't have any more setbacks."

And the benefit of that, Federer explained: "Now I have my confidence back. It's as simple as that."

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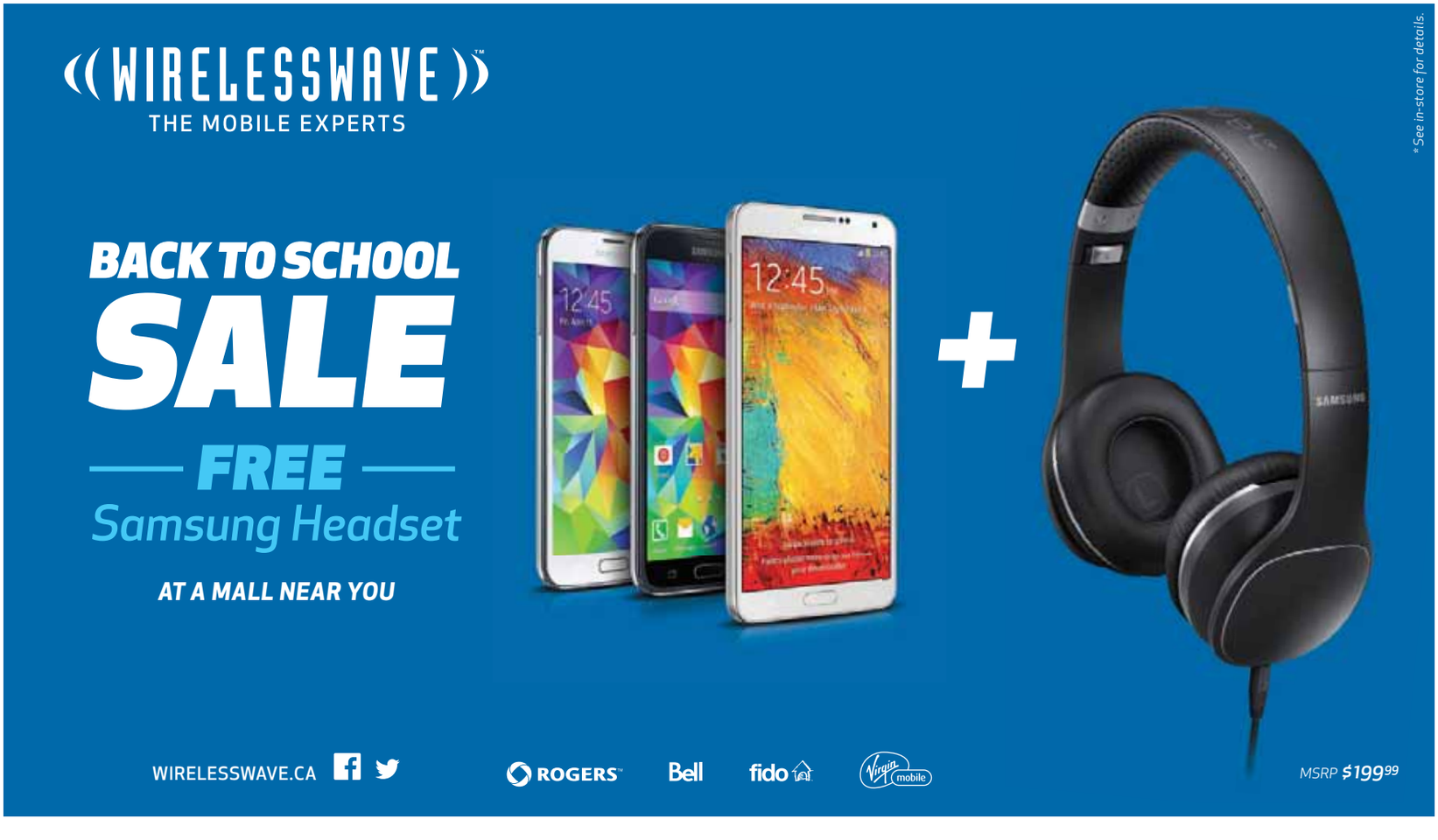

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2015 Honda Fit

- **Type:** Five-door, front-wheel-drive compact hatchback
- **Engine:** 1.5-litre inline four-cylinder (130 hp)
- **Transmission:** Six-speed manual, continuously variable automatic (CVT)
- **Base price:** $16,163, including destination fee

Market position

Slight upscale position in compact hatchback segment, due to very flexible and large interior, afforded by unique centre-of-car positioning of gas tank. Seats fold in more permutations than a Swiss Army knife, to further expand the cargo-carrying possibilities.

Points

- Built at a new plant in Mexico. Previous models imported from Japan or China
- Easily the biggest and most flexible interior in its subcompact class
- Engine upgraded to direct-injection, DOHC and variable valve timing and duration
- Rear-view camera and Bluetooth now standard features

Inside, hard plastic bits have been replaced with soft materials.

Safety features

An IIHS top safety pick (the only small car to achieve an Acceptable rating in the small overlap frontal crash test), six airbags, side-curtain airbags have rollover sensors, stability and traction control, hill-start assist, available LaneWatch display and a multi-view rear-view camera with guidelines.

Still funky but a better Fit

Review. Honda's redesigned hatchback is less egg-shaped, boasts more power, features and leg room

MIKE GOETZ
drive@metronews.ca

PHOTOS: MIKE GOETZ

In the compact hatchback segment, the Honda Fit stuck out. Not quite like a sore thumb, because it's not ugly like a sore thumb. It's ugly more in an egg-shaped way.

That shape, combined with the unique positioning of its gas tank (underneath the driver's seat), helped it stick out some more — by creating the conditions for a cavernous interior for its size, and then by its so-called Magic Seat, which allows owners to exploit that space to marvellous effect.

When it came time to design an all-new Fit for 2015, Honda stuck with the program — enhancing the theme of interior versatility, while updating several items that were lacking and/or not up to expectations.

The automaker still managed to increase the cargo volume to 1,492 litres. This was accomplished by stretching the wheelbase, flattening the gas tank, and various other measures.

Rear-seat leg room has been greatly increased, but at the expense of the rear cargo area.

When it came to engine tech, Honda threw the proverbial kitchen sink at this new 1.5-litre four-cylinder — direct injection, DOHC, high-end variable valve control systems, and even oil-jet piston cooling.

It has more horses (130) and torque (114) yet manages to get better fuel efficiency than the engine it replaces.

The exterior style is less egg and more wedge, with a substantial lower body to suggest a more-planted road feel, which is definitely the case.

There is obviously more power, too, but the predominant first impression is one of vastly improved smoothness, sophistication and quiet.

You can still hear road noise and the engine — especially on the highway.

The interior is several notches better. The hard plastic bits have been replaced by softer materials, and the cabin is rendered in an elegant, modern design.

In the transformation to a more grown-up car, Fit lost some its teenage-like exuberance, which made you want to drive it hard and fling it about.

But the 2015 Fit is more capable in every criteria, and easily one of the best small hatchbacks on the market.

Compare

1 Ford Fiesta
Base price: $16,059
Drives well, lots of standard kit, rear seat a bit cramped.

2 Kia Rio5
Base price:$16,014
Rio5 and Hyundai Accent, offer good value and looks.

3 Nissan Versa Note
Base price: $15,865
Less technology but gets the job done.

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Classy rides

Heading to college or university? Considering a second-hand ride to ease the commute or improve the experience? Here are some suggested models that are relatively reliable and economical

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
drive@metronews.ca

2006-10 Kia Rio

Personality: Value-Minded
The Draw: Rio delivers upscale driving feel and a whack of features. Owners enjoyed peppy performance, great headroom and good mileage.
Test Drive: Watch for "check engine" or "airbag" lights. If either or both are illuminated, determine why before buying. Other potential electronic issues include headlight or taillamp failure. Be sure the timing belt isn't overdue for a change, and if it is, budget for a replacement.

2006-13 BMW Mini Cooper

Personality: Fun-Loving
The Draw: With a priority on fun-to-drive dynamics and exceptional fuel mileage, the Mini Cooper is frisky, thrifty, cheeky and stylish. Manoeuvrability and outward visibility are great, too.
Test Drive: Confirm oil level and condition on all models. Take the car to a mechanic, asking for advice on a potential timing-chain issue and to check the water pump.

2005-10 Chevy Cobalt/Pontiac G5

Personality: Great Deal
The Draw: These corporate twins were available in coupe or sedan versions with numerous powertrains. Owners gave them top marks for steering feel, ride comfort and athletic performance. Higher-than-average reliability and lower-than-average resale value make Cobalt and G5 a great student buy.
Test Drive: Some suspension components have worn out prematurely, so a good going-over by a mechanic is recommended. Your local GM dealership can check that all recall-related work has been performed. Be on the lookout for inconsistent performance from the steering, which could indicate a problem with the electric power steering system.

2006-11 Honda Civic

Personality: Reliable Sidekick
The Draw: Civic will appeal to students who like a sure bet, thanks to a decades-long reputation for reliability, durability and no-nonsense operation. Owners note great fuel mileage, plenty of space and storage, and a comfortable ride.
Test Drive: Listen to the suspension with the stereo and climate control off. A clunking or popping sound over bumps could indicate a worn-out component or an improperly installed 'bump stop' in the suspension. Although very rare, some owners of early models in this generation have reported head-gasket issues, so confirm that no oil is being burned, and that there are no signs of oil in the engine coolant, or vice versa.

2004-09 Mazda3

Personality: The Athlete
The Draw: Noted for sporty performance, upscale looks and its flexible hatchback variant (top photo), the Mazda 3 delivers above-average driving pleasure and style. Driving dynamics and comfort are highly rated by owners.
Test Drive: The audio display screen was known to fail over time, so be sure it's in proper working order. Note that tires are pricier on models with 18-inch wheels, so be sure they're in good shape. Check for clutch slippage with the manual transmission, and hard shifting from the automatic. If either is apparent, investigate why. A trip to a mechanic may save you a pricey repair bill. Investigate carefully for rust, especially underneath the doors and around wheel-wells.

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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
In recent weeks you've thrown yourself into life like there was no tomorrow but not even an Aries can keep going indefinitely. Slow down and get your world back into balance.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
This is one of the best times of the year to get things done, but the things you do must not be of a minor nature. Use today's Sun-Pluto contact to aim higher.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Make sure you know all the facts before getting involved in a feud. You may want to help but if you're unaware of what is really going on you may end up making it even worse.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Today's cosmic influences will smooth your path and make it easy for you to get from A to B with a minimum of fuss. Travel and social activities will go well for you over the next few days.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You need a favour from someone and because you're unsure what their reaction will be you aren't looking forward to it. They'll give you what you need.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Today's link between the Sun in your sign and Pluto in Capricorn means you're endowed with extra power. Go all out to get what it is you most desire.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You'll do best today if you make a conscious effort to shut out the world and create a mental and emotional bubble inside which everything is peaceful.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Social activities will bring you luck over the next 24 hours, so get out and impress. The more attention you get, the more you will accomplish.

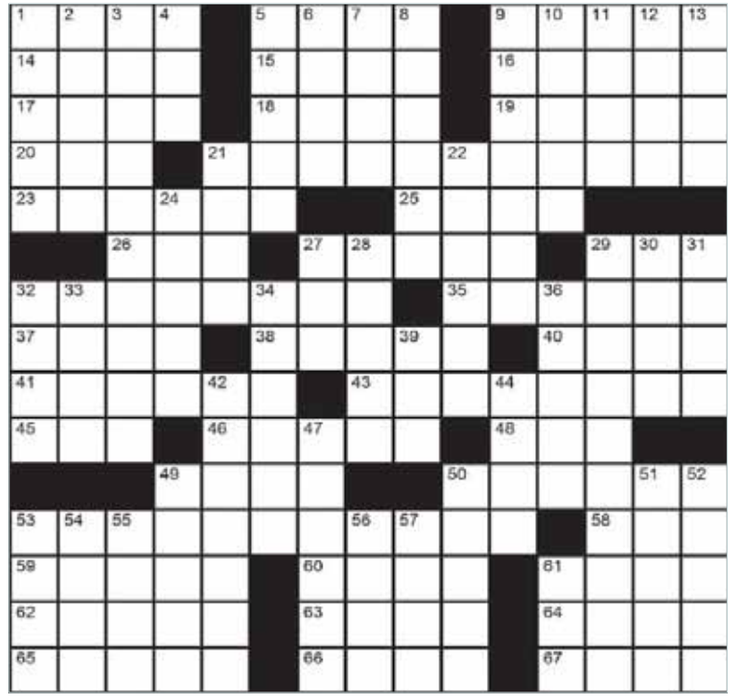
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Others may be winding down a but you must keep the tempo going and make sure you stay visible. There are big opportunities coming up, so make sure important people know you.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Actions speak louder than words and with Pluto in your sign activated by the Sun you'll be all action from the moment you awake to the moment your head hits the pillow.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You may be tempted to forget about your principles and do something underhand today but you are advised against it. You have a rep for honesty.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Make an effort to see things from another person's point of view today. You may be surprised to find that the way they look at the world is not that far away from your own.

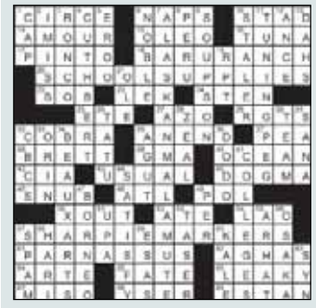
Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Jill's hill pal
5. 27th US President
9. "A Place Like This": Current tune by Canadian duo __ Jordan
14. Speck
15. Puccini aria: "_ __ Babbino Caro"
16. Satire
17. Boxes [abbr.]
18. Fall hue
19. __ de menthe
20. Clod
21. American country singer whose 2014 album is called 'Storyline': 2 wds.
23. Cape Island link
25. 'The Art of Eight Limbs', __ Thai
26. 17th Greek letter
27. Chicago choreographer
29. US univ.
32. Vegan's biker-look fabric
35. Shirt part
37. "Candid Camera" host Allen
38. Songstress Ms. Sande
40. "Let's go!"
41. Beauty treatment
43. Scottish __ __ (Gig for the character Jamie Fraser in "Outlander")
45. Wee weekday
46. Gambles
48. Hearer
49. "Your time __ __!"
50. "__ __ hotdogs!" (Ballpark shout)
53. Winnipeg boutiques-gourmet district: 2 wds.
58. Half a Teletubby
59. Curry powder ingredient
60. Ed Sheeran song
61. Spaghetti cheese, commonly
62. Singer Mr. Lopez
63. 'Persist' suffix
64. Ms. Hathaway
65. Glacial ice block
66. Actress Charlotte's
67. Raised flatland

Down
1. "Glee" star Mr. Artist
2. Fragrant oil from flowers
3. September 1864 on the road to Canadian Confederation... 150th anniversary of the Charlottetown __
4. Cdn. highway measures
5. Bruce Springsteen's "Born __ __"
6. Thebes deity
7. 1978 Sylvester Stallone m.o.v.i.e. directed by Norman Jewison
8. Carved symbols
9. Broadcaster Mr. Williams (Trivia! One of MuchMusic's original VJs)
10. Range
11. "Friends" friend
12. Kenny Rogers' "She Believes __ __"
13. Salon supplies
21. Funny lark
22. "From __ with Love" (1963)
24. "Grease" (1978) song: "You're the One __ __ Want"
27. Masc. opposite
28. Vacuum cleaner brand
29. Nostalgic stroll-taker's location: 2 wds.
30. Welsh composer/actor Mr. Novello
31. Mind
32. Fizzling-out noise
33. Beach feast
34. __ balloon
36. Fanfare
39. Bean and Cool J
42. 'Old Lace' poison
44. Require
47. Can-Am __ (Bombardier's 3-wheel motorcycle)
49. Songstress Ms. Menzel
50. Doors on fences
51. Acquires
52. Newfoundland town
53. Performs
54. Remedy
55. Mideast chieftain, variantly
56. Canadian hardware store
57. Formerly
61. Cooking spray

Yeterday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

7				2				6
	4			6			8	
9			8		3			1
3		9				6		8
		4	6		2	1		
6		8				7		5
8			2		6			4
	3			1			7	
4				5				2

Yesterday's Sudoku

1	4	5	3	6	7	9	2	8
7	2	9	8	1	4	3	5	6
8	6	3	9	2	5	1	7	4
5	1	4	2	7	9	8	6	3
3	9	7	4	8	6	2	1	5
6	8	2	1	5	3	4	9	7
9	7	1	5	3	8	6	4	2
2	3	6	7	4	1	5	8	9
4	5	8	6	9	2	7	3	1

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